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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: CROSS-STRAIT RELATIONS

Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused news coverage April 18 on the alleged power struggle in President-elect Ma Ying-jeou's team; on the idea of relocating the Presidential Office; and on the row between the Chinese government and CNN. In terms of editorials and commentaries, an editorial in the pro-independence "Liberty Times" tried to remind the Taiwan people of China's bullying by citing the example of China's suppression of freedom of the press and the Chinese government's recent move for inflaming patriotism in China. End summary.

"Does It Mean that the Taiwan People Have to Grin and Bear It?"

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 720,000] editorialized (4/18):

"In recent years, China always claims publicly that it wants a peaceful rise and the establishment of a harmonious world. In other words, [China] seemingly is ready to accept the norm of civilization and enter the big family of international human rights. But in fact we can always easily tell from China's behavior that the so-called peaceful rise is actually a malicious rise. [China's] so-called a harmonious world is based on the prerequisite that the international community has to yield to China's standards. ...

"China's official and people's national sentiments can ignite just by a slight inflammation, and Taiwan should take warning from this. At the moment, some people lay the future of Taiwan's economy on China, including the opening of direct flights across the Taiwan Strait, allowing Chinese capital to flow to Taiwan, opening up [Taiwan] to Chinese tourists, allowing conversion between the New Taiwan dollar and the Chinese yuan, and promoting a cross-Strait common market. However, as described before, if [Taiwan] walks this road, once China's officials and people are discontented with Taiwan, they can oppress Taiwan into yielding to China's threats by using methods such as 'boycotting Taiwan products' or 'prohibiting travel to Taiwan.' For example, in order to attract Chinese tourists, [Taiwan's] tourism industry will greatly increase the construction of tourism facilities for them. Not only will tourists from developed countries such as Europe, the United States and Japan be crowded out, but our government will definitely also be forced to take China's blackmail when facing pressure from tourism industry people if China prohibits Chinese tourists from visiting Taiwan. Shouldn't those people who keep saying 'rely on China' day and night think about the possible consequences in the first place?"

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